



# Quebec's Social and Health Survey Information: Baseline Data Report 2008 (Section 2.4)

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## 2.4 Diet: Perceptions, Practices, and Food Insecurity

**Table 2.4.1 – Perception of the quality of eating habits according to sex and age, population 15 and over, Quebec, 1998**

	Excellent or very good %	Good	Average or poor
<b>Men</b>			
15-24	34.2	44.8	21.0
25-44	33.2	47.1	19.7
45-64	41.1	45.1	13.9
65 years+	47.5	42.0	10.5
<b>Total</b>	37.4	45.5	17.1
<b>Women</b>			
15-24	35.4	46.5	18.0
25-44	39.1	46.3	14.6
45-64	44.9	43.0	12.0
65 years+	45.9	44.5	9.6
<b>Total</b>	41.3	45.1	13.6
<b>Both sexes</b>			
15-24	34.8	45.7	19.5
25-44	36.1	46.7	17.2
45-64	43.0	44.0	13.0
65 years+	46.6	43.4	10.0
<b>Total</b>	39.4	45.3	15.3
<b>Population '000</b>	2,295	2,637	892

Source: Institut de la statistique du Québec, *Enquête social et de santé* 1998.

- With respect to the perception of respondents regarding the quality of their eating habits, the greatest percentage (45.3%) reported good habits followed by 39.4% reporting excellent or very good habits.
- Women were somewhat more likely than men to perceive their eating habits as excellent or very good. Men 65 years of age and over were the most likely group to perceive their eating habits as excellent or very good followed closely by women of the same age group.
- The greatest likelihood of perceived average or poor eating habits was among men 15-24 followed by women of the same age group.

**Table 2.4.2 – Perception of the quality of eating habits according to the perception of the state of health, population 15 and over, Quebec, 1998**

	Excellent or very good	Good	Average or poor
	%		
<b>Perception of state of health</b>			
<b>Excellent or very good</b>	53.0	38.1	9.0
<b>Good</b>	24.3	56.1	19.6
<b>Average or poor</b>	19.8	47.3	32.9

Source: Institut de la statistique du Québec, *Enquête social et de santé 1998*.

- There was a strong correlation between how survey respondents perceived their state of health and their perception of the quality of their eating habits. Those who claimed an excellent or very good state of health tended to report excellent or very good eating habits. A good state of health correlated with good eating habits and an average or poor state of health was reported most frequently among those with average or poor eating habits.

**Table 2.4.3 – Perception of the quality of eating habits according to the indicator of body mass, population 15 and over, Quebec, 1998**

	Excellent or very good	Good	Average or poor
	%		
<b>Underweight</b>	46.9	39.7	13.4
<b>Healthy weight</b>	41.3	45.1	13.6
<b>Overweight</b>	31.7	48.1	20.1

Source: Institut de la statistique du Québec, *Enquête social et de santé 1998*.

- Overweight survey respondents were the most likely group to report good eating habits and the least likely to report average or poor eating habits.
- Healthy weight was most frequently reported by those who perceived their eating habits as good followed by those with excellent or very good habits.
- Those with excellent or good eating habits were the most likely to report being underweight.
- A greater percentage of those who have average or poor eating habits claimed to be overweight compared to healthy weight or underweight.

**Table 2.4.4 – Consumption of meals prepared outside the home in the course of 7 days according to sex and age, population 15 and over, Quebec, 1998**

	Never	On occasion (1 to 3 times)	Often (4 to 6 times)	Consistently (7 times or more)
	%			
<b>Men</b>				
15-24	14.5	47.7	26.2	11.6
25-44	19.0	49.0	21.3	10.6
45-64	32.3	44.9	16.0	6.9
65 years+	51.9	38.6	7.4	2.2**
<b>Total</b>	25.9	46.4	19.0	8.7
<b>Women</b>				
15-24	15.3	57.8	19.5	7.3
25-44	23.3	56.6	16.0	4.1
45-64	37.0	51.7	9.7	1.6*
65 years+	52.8	41.5	4.1*	1.6**
<b>Total</b>	30.5	53.1	12.9	3.5
<b>Both sexes</b>				
15-24	14.9	52.7	22.9	9.5
25-44	21.1	52.8	18.7	7.4
45-64	34.7	48.4	12.8	4.2
65 years+	52.4	40.3	5.5	1.8
<b>Total</b>	28.3	49.8	15.9	6.1
<b>Population '000</b>	1,657	2,895	922	351

Source: Institut de la statistique du Québec, *Enquête sociale et de santé 1998*.

\* Interpret with caution

\*\* Imprecise estimate, indication only

- Women were more likely than men to report consuming meals prepared outside the home in the course of 7 days. They were also more likely than men to report doing so often (4 to 6 times) as opposed to on occasion (1 to 3 times).
- The highest rate of consumption of meals prepared outside the home (4 to 6 times per week) was reported by female respondents 15-44 years of age. When both sexes are combined the 15-44 age group are the most likely to consume meals prepared outside the home and those 65 years and over are the least likely.

**Table 2.4.5 – Frequency and type of meal consumed outside the home in the course of 7 days, population 15 and over, 1998**

	1 time	2 times	3 times or more
	%		
<b>Frozen foods</b>	53.7	27.0	19.2
<b>Meals delivered to the home or takeout</b>	70.5	20.4	9.0
<b>Restaurant, cafeteria or snack bar meals (excluding takeout)</b>	43.1	25.0	31.8

Source: Institut de la statistique du Québec, *Enquête social et de santé 1998*.

- The type of meal prepared outside the home most likely to have been consumed by respondents in the course of 7 days was at a restaurant, cafeteria or snack bar. There was a high likelihood of meals delivered to the home or takeout once a week.

**Table 2.4.6 – Type of meal consumed outside the home in the course of 7 days, percentage of the population 15 and over, 1998**

	%	Population '000
<b>Frozen foods</b>	16.7	970
<b>Meals delivered to the home or takeout</b>	35.8	2,077
<b>Restaurant, cafeteria or snack bar meals (excluding takeout)</b>	57.5	3,342

Source: Institut de la statistique du Québec, *Enquête social et de santé 1998*.

- 57.5% of survey respondents consumed restaurant, cafeteria or snack bar meals in the course of 7 days, 35.8% had meals delivered to the home or takeout and 16.7% consumed frozen foods.

**Table 2.4.7 – Food insecurity according to sex and age, population 15 and over, Quebec, 1998**

	Sex		Age					Total	Pop.
	Men	Women	0-14	15-24	25-44	45-64	65+	%	'000
<b>Yes or no response to one or more of the 3 aspects of food insecurity</b>									
Yes	8.3	8.3	10.0	10.7	9.0	7.0	3.0	8.3	593
No	91.7	91.7	90.1	89.3	91.0	93.0	97.0	91.7	6,580
<b>Monotonous eating routine</b>									
Often	1.6	1.5	1.6*	1.8*	1.6	2.0	0.6**	1.6	112
Sometimes	5.8	5.8	7.4	7.8	6.5	4.4	2.1*	5.8	418
Never	92.6	92.6	91.1	90.5	91.9	93.7	97.4	92.6	6,643
<b>Restriction on food availability</b>									
Often	1.1	1.1	1.0*	1.3*	1.1	1.5	0.1*	1.1	78
Sometimes	3.6	3.3	4.5	3.9	3.8	2.8	1.4*	3.4	247
Never	95.3	95.6	94.5	94.9	95.0	95.7	98.5	95.5	6,847
<b>Incapacity to offer balanced meals to children</b>									
Often	0.7*	1.0*	1.0*	0.9*	0.8*	0.8*	--	0.9	54
Sometimes	2.9	3.5	3.9	3.5*	2.6	2.6	3.0*	3.2	217
Never	96.4	95.5	95.2	95.6	96.6	96.6	97.0	95.9	6,902

Source: Institut de la statistique du Québec, *Enquête sociale et de santé* 1998.

\* Interpret with caution

\*\* Imprecise estimate, indication only

- There was little variation in levels of food insecurity among survey respondents when considered by sex and age. There tends to be a somewhat lower level of food insecurity among those who are 65 years and over.

**Table 2.4.8 – Perception of the quality of eating habits according to certain demographic and socio-economic characteristics, population 15 and over, Quebec, 1998**

		Excellent or very good	Good	Average or poor
		%		
<b>Civil status</b>				
	Married	42.9	45.4	11.7
	Common law	38.6	45.9	15.5
	Widowed, separated or divorced	38.8	43.5	17.8
	Single	34.4	45.4	20.2
<b>Family type</b>				
	Unattached	37.3	42.1	20.6
	Couple without children	43.1	44.1	12.8
	Other family arrangement	33.1	44.7	22.2
	Two-parent family	39.7	46.8	13.6
	Reconstituted family	38.0	44.0	18.0
	One-parent family	33.5	48.0	18.5
<b>Relative scolarity</b>				
	Very low	35.0	46.8	18.3
	Low	35.5	48.4	16.1
	Average	38.4	47.1	14.6
	High	38.9	45.1	16.0
	Very High	48.5	39.6	11.9
<b>Employment status</b>				
	Employed	38.3	46.1	15.6
	Student	36.1	45.3	18.6
	Homemaker	43.9	43.9	12.2
	Retired	45.1	44.2	10.7
	Unemployed	31.3	43.4	25.4
<b>Professional category</b>				
	Non-qualified worker, labourer	34.3	45.2	20.6
	Foreman, qualified labourer	31.6	51.7	16.8
	Office, sales, service	36.5	45.9	17.5
	Intermediate manager, semi-professional, technician	42.7	42.9	13.4
	Professional, senior manager	50.0	39.3	10.7
<b>Income level</b>				
	Very poor	33.4	42.4	24.2
	Poor	35.3	46.3	18.5
	Lower middle income	37.5	47.7	14.8
	Upper middle income	40.9	44.9	14.1
	High income	46.9	40.5	12.6
<b>Perception of financial situation</b>				
	Very poor	26.9	39.6	33.4
	Poor	30.6	47.8	21.6
	Sufficient income	40.4	46.6	13.1
	Comfortable	48.3	39.7	12.0

Source: Institut de la statistique du Québec, *Enquête sociale et de santé 1998*.

- Survey respondents who were single were more likely to perceive their eating habits as average or poor compared to those who were married, common law, widowed or divorced.

- Married respondents were the most likely to perceive their eating habits as excellent or very good. Couples without children were the family type most likely to report excellent or very good eating habits.
- Very high scolarity levels tend to be associated with perception of eating habits as excellent or very good.
- The perception of eating habits as excellent or very good was most frequently reported among respondents who were retired, homemakers and employed.





**Table 2.4.9 – Consumption of meals prepared outside the home in the course of 7 days according to certain demographic and socio-economic characteristics, population 15 years and older, Quebec, 1998**

		Never	On occasion (1-3 times)	Often (4-6 times)	Consistently (7 times or more)
		%			
<b>Civil status</b>					
	Married	33.1	50.5	12.5	4.0
	Common law	19.9	54.2	18.4	7.5
	Widowed, separated or divorced	40.9	43.0	11.2	4.9
	Single	19.8	49.1	22.1	9.0
<b>Family type</b>					
	Unattached	34.2	41.7	16.1	8.0*
	Couple without children	33.2	49.4	12.9	4.5
	Other family arrangement	22.7	46.7	20.6	10.0
	Two-parent family	24.8	52.6	16.9	5.7
	Reconstituted family	21.8	50.7	19.5	8.0*
	One-parent family	26.1	51.2	15.8	6.9
<b>Relative scolarity</b>					
	Very low	39.0	44.7	11.7	4.6
	Low	29.3	52.4	13.0	5.4
	Average	27.8	50.5	15.7	6.1
	High	24.6	50.9	18.3	6.3
	Very High	20.4	51.3	20.4	7.9
<b>Employment status</b>					
	Employed	20.2	51.7	19.9	8.2
	Student	16.1	53.2	23.1	7.5
	Homemaker	46.1	47.0	5.3	1.6*
	Retired	48.7	43.7	5.7	2.0*
	Unemployed	41.1	44.4	11.2	3.4*
<b>Professional category</b>					
	Non-qualified worker, labourer	21.9	51.8	16.8	9.6
	Foreman, qualified labourer	24.9	51.3	17.1	6.7
	Office, sales, service	18.2	54.9	19.6	7.3
	Intermediate manager, semi-professional, technician	15.6	49.5	24.6	10.4
	Professional, senior manager	14.7	50.2	27.2	7.9
<b>Income level</b>					
	Very poor	47.4	38.5	8.4*	5.7*
	Poor	38.3	44.9	12.3	4.5*
	Lower middle income	31.0	49.6	14.3	5.2
	Upper middle income	23.7	53.2	17.0	6.1
	High income	15.6	50.1	24.2	10.2
<b>Perception of financial situation</b>					
	Very poor	46.8	40.2	8.6*	4.5*
	Poor	34.5	46.6	14.3	4.7
	Sufficient income	27.0	52.2	15.4	5.5
	Comfortable	20.1	49.0	21.0	10.0

Source: Institut de la statistique du Québec, *Enquête social et de santé 1998*.

\* Interpret with caution

- Survey respondents who were single or living common law were more likely than married or widowed/separated/divorced respondents to consume meals prepared outside the home.
- Respondents with higher education levels reported higher frequencies of consuming meals prepared outside the home.

- Students and employed persons were substantially more likely than homemakers, retirees or unemployment to be frequent consumers of meals prepared outside the home.
- Professionals and other white collar workers were more frequent consumers of meals prepared outside the home than blue collar workers.
- Survey respondents in higher income brackets were more likely to consume meals outside the home than those in lower income brackets.
- Those who perceived their financial situation as "comfortable" reported higher frequency of consumption of meals prepared outside the home.



**Table 2.4.10 – Meals eaten alone according to certain demographic and socio-economic characteristics, population 15 years and older, Quebec, 1998**

	%	Yes	No
<b>Civil status</b>			
	Married	2.6	97.4
	Common law	3.8	96.2
	Widowed, separated or divorced	56.6	43.4
	Single	32.2	67.8
<b>Family type</b>			
	Unattached	84.4	15.6
	Couple without children	4.1	95.9
	Other family arrangement	29.0	71.0
	Two-parent family	4.4	95.6
	Reconstituted family	5.3*	94.7
	One-parent family	13.7	86.3
<b>Relative scolarity</b>			
	Very low	16.1	84.0
	Low	14.6	85.4
	Average	17.1	82.9
	High	17.1	82.9
	Very High	19.9	80.1
<b>Employment status</b>			
	Employed	14.6	85.4
	Student	15.1	84.9
	Homemaker	15.6	84.4
	Retired	26.1	73.9
	Unemployed	27.7	72.3
<b>Professional category</b>			
	Non-qualified worker, labourer	15.3	84.7
	Foreman, qualified labourer	13.0	87.0
	Office, sales, service	14.2	85.8
	Intermediate manager, semi-professional, technician	16.2	83.9
	Professional, senior manager	14.3	85.7
<b>Income level</b>			
	Very poor	45.1	54.9
	Poor	25.9	74.2
	Lower middle income	17.1	82.9
	Upper middle income	12.4	87.6
	High income	7.9	92.1
<b>Perception of financial situation</b>			
	Very poor	31.6	68.4
	Poor	21.8	78.3
	Sufficient income	15.1	84.9
	Comfortable	15.2	84.9

Source: Institut de la statistique du Québec, *Enquête social et de santé 1998*.

\* Interpret with caution

- Civil status and family type appear to be determinants in the frequency with which respondents reported eating alone. Those who are widowed /divorced/separated and those who are single were much more likely than persons who are married or living in a common law situation to eat meals alone.
- Retired and unemployed persons reported higher frequencies of eating alone than did the employed, students or homemakers among respondents.
- The poor and very poor reported a higher frequency of eating alone than did those with middle or high incomes.
- Those who perceived their financial situation as very poor or poor were more likely to report high frequency of eating alone than those who perceived their income as sufficient or comfortable.



**Table 2.4.11 – Food insecurity according to certain demographic and socio-economic characteristics, population 15 years and older, Quebec, 1998**

Yes or no response to one or more of the 3 aspects of food insecurity (Table 2.4.7)			
		Yes	No
		%	
<b>Civil status</b>			
	Married	4.0	96.1
	Common law	7.9	92.1
	Widowed, separated or divorced	12.5	87.5
	Single	12.1	87.9
<b>Family type with at least one child under 18</b>			
	Two-parent family	5.9	94.1
	Reconstituted family	8.7*	91.3
	One-parent family	22.5	77.5
<b>Relative scolarity</b>			
	Very low	14.3	85.7
	Low	7.8	92.2
	Average	6.3	93.7
	High	5.8	94.3
	Very High	4.8	95.2
<b>Employment status</b>			
	Employed	5.4	94.6
	Student	9.5	90.5
	Homemaker	11.5	88.5
	Retired	4.4	95.6
	Unemployed	27.1	72.9
<b>Professional category</b>			
	Non-qualified worker, labourer	8.9	91.1
	Foreman, qualified labourer	6.2	93.8
	Office, sales, service	5.5	94.5
	Intermediate manager, semi-professional, technician	3.5*	96.5
	Professional, senior manager	2.0	98.0
<b>Income level</b>			
	Very poor	38.7	61.3
	Poor	19.5	80.5
	Lower middle income	6.8	93.3
	Upper middle income	2.0	98.0
	High income	1.2	98.8
<b>Perception of financial situation</b>			
	Very poor	32.5	67.5
	Poor	18.0	82.0
	Sufficient income	4.2	95.8
	Comfortable	1.8*	98.2

Source: Institut de la statistique du Québec, *Enquête social et de santé 1998*.

\* Interpret with caution

- Single people and those who are widowed/separated/divorced were more likely to report food insecurity than were married persons or those living common law.
- Survey respondents in single-parent families were more likely to report food insecurity than were those in two-parent or reconstituted families.
- Survey respondents with very low scolarity were more likely to report food insecurity than were those with other levels of scolarity.
- Unemployed respondents were much more likely to report food insecurity than respondents with other types of employment status.
- Labourers and non-qualified workers were more likely to report food insecurity than other types of workers.
- Income is a strong predictor of food insecurity as respondents who are poor and very poor are much more likely to report insecurity than those with middle and high incomes.
- In terms of respondent's perception of their financial situation, those who perceived themselves as poor or very poor were much more likely to report food insecurity than respondents who were comfortable or who reported sufficient income.

**Table 2.4.12 – Perception of quality of eating habits by mother tongue**

<b>N=</b>	<b>18211</b>	<b>1054</b>	<b>685</b>	<b>445</b>
	<b>French</b>	<b>English</b>	<b>Other</b>	<b>n/a</b>
<b>Excellent</b>	7.99%	7.40%	10.36%	13.93%
<b>Very good</b>	29.32%	33.49%	30.80%	31.46%
<b>Good</b>	46.48%	41.08%	44.23%	37.53%
<b>Average</b>	13.56%	13.47%	11.53%	12.58%
<b>Poor</b>	1.77%	2.66%	1.31%	0.00%
<b>Refusal</b>	0.88%	1.90%	1.75%	3.82%
	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

Source: Institut de la statistique du Québec, *Enquête social et de santé* 1998.

- English-speaking survey respondents were more likely to report very good eating habits but were also more likely to report poor eating habits than did French-speaking respondents.

**Table 2.4.13 – Consumption of meals prepared outside the home by mother tongue**

<b>N=</b>	<b>18211</b>	<b>1029</b>	<b>1045</b>	<b>445</b>
	<b>French</b>	<b>English</b>	<b>Other</b>	<b>n/a</b>
<b>Yes</b>	69.18%	71.23%	59.62%	56.40%
<b>No</b>	29.39%	26.92%	37.42%	36.85%
<b>Unknown</b>	1.42%	1.85%	2.97%	6.74%
	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

Source: Institut de la statistique du Québec, *Enquête sociale et de santé* 1998.

- English-speaking survey respondents were slightly more likely to report consuming meals outside the home than were Francophone respondents.

**Table 2.4.14 – Frequency of consumption of meals prepared outside the home by mother tongue**

<b>N=</b>	<b>18211</b>	<b>1029</b>	<b>1045</b>	<b>445</b>
	<b>French</b>	<b>English</b>	<b>Other</b>	<b>n/a</b>
<b>Never</b>	29.39%	26.92%	37.42%	36.85%
<b>1 to 3 times</b>	48.64%	48.20%	41.34%	38.88%
<b>4 to 6 times</b>	13.69%	15.35%	11.10%	10.34%
<b>More than 6 times</b>	5.22%	5.34%	4.40%	4.27%
<b>Unknown</b>	3.06%	4.18%	5.74%	9.66%
	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

Source: Institut de la statistique du Québec, *Enquête sociale et de santé* 1998.

- In terms of frequency of consuming meals prepared outside the home, English-speaking survey respondents were more likely to be at the high frequency end of the spectrum.

**Table 2.4.15 – Meals eaten alone by mother tongue**

<b>N=</b>	<b>18211</b>	<b>1029</b>	<b>1045</b>	<b>445</b>
	<b>French</b>	<b>English</b>	<b>Other</b>	<b>n/a</b>
<b>Yes</b>	14.15%	20.51%	16.65%	18.20%
<b>No</b>	84.08%	77.65%	81.15%	75.96%
<b>Unknown</b>	1.77%	1.85%	2.20%	5.84%
	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

Source: Institut de la statistique du Québec, *Enquête sociale et de santé* 1998.

- English-speaking survey respondents were more likely to report eating meals alone than were Francophone respondents.